

Hobbies

U.S. coin sets without the 'S' mean big \$\$\$

By Roger Boye

Here are answers to more questions on coins and paper money.

Q—We've been buying proof sets from the government for several years and understand that certain "error sets" are worth big money, especially the 1968 set. What would be the value of such a find?

K. K., Brookfield

A—Since 1968, coins placed in government-sealed proof sets are supposed to carry "S" mint marks (for San Francisco). But federal workers apparently made at least six 1968 sets containing a dime without the "S," and experts say those sets are worth at least \$6,000 each today.

In 1970, Uncle Sam issued about 2,200 sets also containing

"S-less" dimes (retail value \$600 each); in 1971, 1,655 sets with "S-less" nickels (\$750); and in 1983, at least 100 sets with "S-less" dimes (\$800). Also, hobby newspapers have reported discoveries of at least two 1975 sets with "S-less" dimes.

Q—How can I order 1990 proof sets? Do I need a special form?

J. N., Chicago

A—On Friday, the United States Mint is scheduled to send order forms for the 1990 sets to collectors whose names are on the government mailing list. The cost this year will be \$11 for each five-coin set, the same price charged since 1981. Coins are housed in sonically sealed cases to keep out dust and moisture.

If you don't receive a form, you can order the sets by sending

a check made payable to the United States Mint to the mint's Customer Service Center, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706.

Incidentally, you also can order 1990 uncirculated coin sets for \$7 each by writing to the same address. They contain 10 coins, a cent through half dollar from the Philadelphia and Denver mints.

Q—What do the words "annuit coeptis" and "novus ordo seclorum" mean on the back sides of \$1 Federal Reserve notes?

N. B., Evanston

A—The words are Latin for "He [God] has favored our undertakings" and "A new order of the ages." They are part of the Great Seal of the United States, which includes an eye (to signify an all-knowing God) and a pyramid (strength and permanence).